

BELCHAMP RURAL DISTRICT.

In the Administrative County of Essex.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health, for 1901.

(Pursuant to the Regulations of the Local Government Board.)

Population 1881, 6,200; 1891, 5,722, 1901, 4,847. Number of Parishes, 16. Acreage, 26,548.
Persons per Acre, 0.18.

Number of inhabited houses 1,213. Average number of persons per house 4.0.

Geological formation: chalk, covered on the higher ground with Boulder Clay, and in the valleys with drift sand and gravel or brick earth. Superficially with alluvium.

Owing to the decennial Census having been taken during this year, the vital statistics can be accurately calculated, which is impossible to do more than approximately during the later years of this period. The following particulars with respect to the recent Census may here be referred to.

The decrease in the population during the last ten years has been considerable, from 5,722 it has fallen to 4,847, a decrease of 875 or 15.2 per cent. The parishes which show the largest decrease are:—Otten Belchamp, Borley, Gestingthorpe, Henny, and Twinstead, these having lost about a fourth of their population. Only the parishes of Bures Hamlet and Middleton show a slight increase.

I. BIRTHS.

There were 90 births registered during the year, equivalent to a birth-rate of 18.6 per thousand of the population. The births and birth-rates in this district during the previous eight years were:—

	1894.	1895.	1896.	1897.	1898.	1899.	1900.	1901.
Births	127	115	113	120	103	83	126	90
Birth-rate	22.1	20.0	19.7	20.9	18.0	14.4	22.0	18.6

The Birth-rate in England and Wales for 1901 was 28.5.

II. DEATHS.

The number of deaths from all causes registered in the district was 76, to which 3 deaths belonging to the district occurring in the Workhouse, Sudbury, have to be added, making the total deaths 79, equivalent to a death-rate of 16.2 per 1,000 of the population. The deaths and death-rates during the previous eight years were:—

	1894.	1895.	1896.	1897.	1898.	1899.	1900.	1901.
Deaths registered	82	70	85	91	71	74	76	76
Deaths belonging to the District	88	78	92	100	78	85	82	79
Death-rate	15.3	13.6	16.0	17.4	13.6	14.8	14.3	16.2

The Death-rate in England and Wales for 1901 was 16.0.

INFANT MORTALITY.

The deaths among infants under one year of age were 11, equivalent to a death-rate of 122.2 per 1,000 of the births registered. The average for the last ten years was 101.0.

In England and Wales it was 151.0.

ZYMOTIC DISEASES

Caused four deaths—Diphtheria 3, Whooping Cough 1.

DEATHS FROM OTHER CAUSES

Included, Phthisis 19, other Tubercular Diseases 6, Cancer 5, Bronchitis and Pneumonia 11, Heart Disease 8, accident 1.

OBSERVATIONS.

The foregoing statistics show that the birth-rate is below the average, even allowing for the decrease in the population, the number of births being 90, while for the last ten years the average has been 123. The death-rate is rather lower than the average though it appears higher, owing to the rate for the last few years being still calculated on the population of 1891. The number of deaths this year were 79, the average for the last ten years was 82.3. The infant mortality is a little higher than the average.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Since the Act came into force in February, 1890, the following cases have been notified:—

	Small-pox	Scarlet Fever.	Diphtheria and Croup.	Typhoid Fever.	Puerperal Fever.	Erysipelas.	Total cases.	Per thousand population.
1890	0	29	6	1	0	5	41	7.1
1891	0	38	0	1	0	1	40	7.0
1892	0	92	2	1	0	6	101	17.6
1893	0	43	47	0	0	11	101	17.6
1894	0	18	4	0	0	8	30	5.2
1895	0	20	1	0	0	4	25	4.3
1896	0	54	8	4	1	7	74	12.9
1897	0	2	11	5	0	4	23	4.0
1898	0	14	8	2	0	9	33	5.7
1899	0	4	10	0	1	10	25	4.3
1900	0	6	7	1	0	4	18	3.1
1901	0	1	20	0	0	5	26	5.3

The following are particulars of the Zymotic Diseases which were notified:—

SCARLET FEVER.

The District has been very free of this disease during the year. The only case being one at the post office in Borley parish, no origin of the infection could be discovered. Isolation was carried out, and the business of the post office temporarily transferred to another house.

DIPHTHERIA.

During the month of January 16 cases of this disease occurred in four houses ; of these, five cases were in the parish of Gestingthorpe, in two families. On the premises of one a small poultry yard was kept in a dirty condition ; at the other there was no special nuisance to complain of. All the cases were mild and recovered. In the parish of Alphamstone six cases occurred in a farm house, two of whom died. There was an offensive manure heap near the house, but on further examination there was found that a long drain pipe, which took the sewage from the house, was partially blocked and never flushed ; this prolonged cesspool was the probable cause of the malignity of the attacks. Five cases occurred in a cottage in Bures Hamlet ; the first took the disease by contact at school with a case in the next district. The family consisted of the parents and seven children ; an empty cottage was taken next door and utilised to separate the children who were well. One of these cases died.

In the summer two cases were notified in the parish of Otten Belchamp ; they were of a mild type. At the rear was a ditch into which house refuse was thrown and had become offensive. In the parish of Lamarsh and Gestingthorpe single cases occurred about the same time of a mild character.

In most of the cases antitoxin was used, and where early injected, was found not only to be curative in its action, but more so acting as a preventive.

The insanitary defects, which were generally found to be present, were in all cases remedied.

MEASLES.

This disease was very prevalent during the months of May, June and July, particularly so in the parishes of Bulmer, Walter Belchamp and Gestingthorpe, necessitating the closing of the schools in these parishes.

SMALL-POX.

No case has occurred in the district. Owing to its prevalence in other parts of Essex and the difficulty that often arises in distinguishing the early stages of this disease from Chicken Pox, specially in adults, this latter disease has for six months been included among the notifiable diseases. Leaflets urging the value of re-vaccination have also been circulated.

WATER SUPPLY.

The deficient rainfall of the last three years has seriously affected most of the wells in the district, reducing the summer stand of water. Shallow wells have suffered most, and in some cases both deep and shallow wells have run dry, causing great inconvenience.

The public well on Twinstead Green has been failing for some years and this year became quite dry. The depth was 35ft. It was resolved that the well should be deepened down to 75ft. At a depth of 40ft. the boulder clay was penetrated, and the boring passed into red crag sands ; beneath these lie the Reading clays, but down to the depth of 75ft. these were not reached, so that so far the search for water has failed. I hope, however, that the boring will be continued a little further with better results.

The deficiency of water in the parish of Otten Belchamp has long been a cause of complaint, as only pond water was available and this becomes unusable in summer. A large pond, near the school, has been examined and it is found that a good land spring enters it. Portion of this pond is now banked in and the water enters by filtration ; all surface water is excluded. A pump is in course of erection, and likely a useful water supply will be available.

In the high lying village of Borley the want of water is a great hardship. Two private wells 85ft. deep, to which most of the cottagers had access, quite failed in their supply, and the only accessible water was from the river nearly a mile off. A water diviner was employed by some of the parishioners, who pointed out accessible sites of plenty of water. The Council have therefore been petitioned to sink a well. As there is about 100ft. of boulder clay here, and land springs are rare the truth of the divination is doubtful.

Three wells in which the water had got low and muddy were cleaned out and repaired.

Five analyses of samples of drinking water were made.

SEWERS AND SEWERAGE.

The privy cesspool is the general mode of dealing with sewage, and disposing of it on garden or allotment ground.

The Foxearth sewage and brewing effluent, which flows for a mile in the Lyston ditch, has not been so offensive since all the hops and yeasty matters from cask washings have been excluded. Mr. Ward has constructed flushing tanks, so that about 12,000 gallons of clear water are discharged with a rush four or five times a week. Lately the sewer culvert was opened and found to be quite clean of deposit and had little smell. Owing to the many complaints respecting this sewage and the difficulty in dealing with the brewery effluent, Dr. Thrush, the County Medical Officer of Health, visited the place, and approved of what was going to be done, and advised a filter trench in addition if the nuisance was not abated. Portions of the ditch where there has been the deposits of several years will also be cleaned out shortly.

Sewer ditches have been cleaned out in Bures Hamlet and Great Heuny. A pond near the school at Middleton which received sewage was cleaned out and the sewage diverted.

In Brook Street, Bures Hamlet, a new sewer was constructed for 120 yards in the place of an open ditch which lay in front of a row of houses.

HOUSES.

No new houses were erected during the year. Four were reported as unfit for human habitation ; of these one was pulled down, one was closed, for one a closing order had to be obtained, and one is still under notice.

Six cases of overcrowding were reported, of these five were remedied by reducing the number of inmates, and one by legal action.

TRADES, &c.

Complaints were made about a Gut Factory in Lamarsh, the washings and drainage from which ran into an open ditch towards the village ; this was remedied by sinking a dead well.

The drains at a slaughter house in Bures Hamlet were repaired and retrapped.

The bakehouses were inspected and found to be satisfactory.

GENERAL.

Legal proceedings were taken in three cases in relation to houses, and three convictions obtained. Also one Magistrates' order obtained to inspect premises.

Systematic inspection has been made in each parish during the year, as well as special inspections when such were required. Annexed is a tabular statement referring to the work done in the several parishes of the District.

The District is still without an Isolation Hospital, so that there is no means of dealing effectually with the first and early cases of infectious diseases to arrest their spread. I strongly advise the amalgamation of the four Districts in the Sudbury Union for this purpose, as a central Isolation Hospital would entail less expenditure, while possessing more conveniences. I hope that now some steps will be taken to accomplish this necessary object, as a Committee from each of the Districts have been appointed to confer on the subject.

Tabular statements, according to the forms supplied by the Local Government Board, of sickness and mortality within the districts are appended to the official reports.

J. SINCLAIR HOLDEN, M.D.

Medical Officer of Health.

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1901.

	Alphamstone	Belcham Otten	Belcham St. Pauls	Belcham Walter	Borley	Bulmer	Bures Hamlet	Foxearth	Gestingthorpe	Great Henny	Little Henny	Lamarsh	Lyston	Middleton	Pentlow	Twinstead	Wickham St. Pauls	TOTAL
Complaints Received	2	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	1	...	1	1	1	...	8
Nuisances Detected	1	6	7	3	3	2	19	5	5	7	...	4	...	11	11	1	4	89
Nuisances abated without Notice	1	1	4	4	3	1	6	1	2	...	...	1	...	7	2	1	...	34
Nuisances abated after Notice Served	...	5	3	...	...	1	13	3	3	7	...	2	...	5	10	...	4	56
Notices Served	...	3	2	...	...	1	8	3	4	5	...	8	...	4	10	1	4	53
Summonses taken out	1	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	3
Convictions	1	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	3
Premises Inspected	1	9	18	12	6	12	34	3	6	11	2	6	...	21	25	9	7	182
Bakehouses Inspected	...	1	2	1	...	1	2	1	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	10
Slaughter Houses Inspected	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Offensive Accumulations	...	1	...	...	...	1	3	1	1	...	...	1	...	3	7	...	...	18
Workshops Inspected (offensive Trades)	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	2
Houses Disinfected	...	1	...	...	2	...	1	...	3	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	8
Overcrowding abated	2	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	1	6
Houses Closed	1	...	...	...	...	...	1
Houses Newly Erected, or re-built	0
Wells Cleansed or Repaired	1	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	...	...	...	...	3
Houses connected with Sewers	7	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	7
Privies (New)	1	...	...	9	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	13
Privies (Improved)	1	2	3	...	...	...	4	...	3	3	...	...	...	4	4	...	...	24
Animals Improperly kept, removed	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	2
Samples of Water taken for Analysis	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1
Drains (New)	1	...	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	4
Drains (Improved)	...	1	2	...	3	...	7	...	3	...	...	...	...	3	...	...	...	19
Houses Reported unfit for Human Habitation	1	...	...	1	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	4
Ditches Cleansed	...	2	...	1	...	...	3	1	...	1	...	1	...	2	2	...	3	16
Magistrates' Order to Inspect Premises.	1	...	...	...	...	...	1

SIDNEY ALLPRESS, C.E., A.S.I., &c.,

Inspector of Nuisances.

